fpOnline NEWSLETTER

Washington State Dept of NATURAL RESOURCES

March 2024

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

fpOnline has an Apparently Successful Bidder

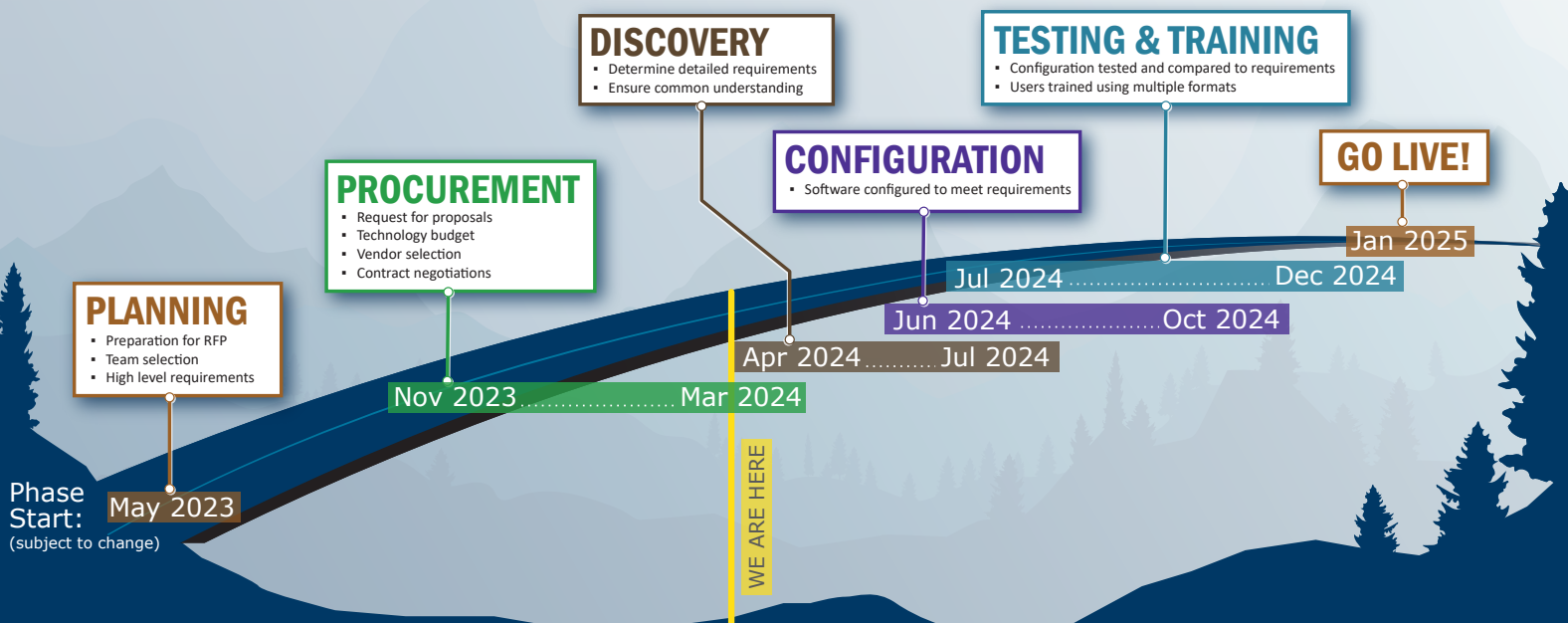DNR has chosen an Apparently Successful Bidder (legal term) for the software vendor to build fpOnline.

» From a total of 10 bidders, DNR asked the four highest-ranking bidders to provide demonstrations and DNR made a determination on February 12.

» Contract negotiation is underway with the Apparently Successful Bidder.

Funding

Washington state House and Senate draft budget updates include full funding for fpOnline.

PROJECT MILESTONES & PHASES

DISCOVERY
- Determine detailed requirements
- Ensure common understanding

TESTING & TRAINING
- Configuration tested and compared to requirements
- Users trained using multiple formats

PROCUREMENT
- Request for proposals
- Technology budget
- Vendor selection
- Contract negotiations

CONFIGURATION
- Software configured to meet requirements

GO LIVE!

Jan 2025

Jul 2024 .... Dec 2024

Jun 2024 .... Oct 2024

PLANNING
- Preparation for RFP
- Team selection
- High level requirements

Apr 2024 .... Jul 2024

Nov 2023 .... Mar 2024

Phase Start:
(subject to change)

May 2023

WE ARE HERE

LOOKAHEAD

🎯 We anticipate signing the contract with the software vendor in late March.

📊 Town Hall Meeting coming soon—potential date is **Tuesday, April 16, 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.** We plan to introduce the software vendor at this meeting and we will announce details by early April.

👥 Monthly, recurring Advisory Committee meetings continue in March.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MARCH					**1**
	4	**5** 👥 DNR FP Staff Advisory Committee 9–10:30 a.m. 👥 Reviewers Advisory Committee 2:30–4 p.m.	**6** 👥 Landowner Advisory Committee 8–9:30 a.m. 📊 *FP Program Coordinator Call 9–10:30 a.m.	**7** 📊 *FP District Manager Meeting 8:15–10 a.m.	**8**
	11	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**
	18	**19** 📊 *Forest Practices Program 8 a.m.–5 p.m. (all day)	**20** Quarterly Meeting - Virtual	**21**	**22**
	25	**25**	**27** 📊 *DNR Sponsor Coalition Meeting 4–5 p.m.	**28** 📊 *fpOnline Steering Committee 3–4:30 p.m.	**29**
APRIL	**1**	**2** 👥 DNR FP Staff Advisory Committee 9–10:30 a.m. 👥 Reviewers Advisory Committee 2:30–4 p.m.	**3** 👥 Landowner Advisory Committee 8–9:30 a.m. 📊 *FP Program Coordinator Call 9–10:30 a.m.	**4** 📊 *FP District Manager Meeting 8:15–10 a.m.	**5**
	8	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
	15	**16** 📊 *FP Assistants Monthly Meeting 1–2 p.m.	**17** 📊 *FP Monthly Program Call 10–11 a.m. 📊 *Forest Regulation Division All-Hands Meeting 8 a.m.–5 p.m. (all day)	**18**	**19**
	22	**23**	**24** 📊 *DNR Sponsor Coalition Meeting 4–5 p.m.	**25** 📊 *fpOnline Steering Committee 3–4:30 p.m.	**26**
	29 📊 Washington Farm Forestry Assoc. Annual Conference; fpOnline booth 8 a.m.–5 p.m.	**30**			

*DNR Internal Forest Practices program meetings

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What is DNR doing to ensure that fpOnline is user-friendly for all users?

fpOnline project leaders have heard loud and clear: our future users want fpOnline to be user-friendly. In the December 2023 survey, 35 percent of respondents feared that applicants would struggle to use fpOnline, and 27 percent worried that applicants would revert to using paper. In addition, many people have told us in interviews some variation of, "keep the software simple and low-frustration, or applicants will get fed up and just submit a manual application."

The fpOnline team agrees. To make sure that the final version of fpOnline is easy to use and meets your needs, DNR has taken the following steps:

» One of the main goals of the software vendor search process was to find a software application that felt user-friendly. We also want your help with user testing to ensure that it is working as users would expect. We're looking for help from external applicants, reviewers, and internal DNR staff. It will take widespread participation to make sure fpOnline is user-friendly for all types of users.

» DNR has done the necessary prep work to ensure that key pieces needed by end users are documented, the project is funded, and the correct data is earmarked for migration or archival.

» The software vendor will be asked to conduct usability studies with a third-party vendor.

» We are hiring a dedicated testing team to find and eliminate bugs, so the user experience won't be ruined by errors.

» The Organizational Change Management (OCM) team is holding monthly interviews and quarterly surveys to make sure communications are meeting user needs.

fpOnline TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Katherine Boyd, Co-Lead for Organizational Change Management

Katherine founded her company, Halcyon Northwest, in 2014. She began her consulting career as a project manager, then transitioned into change management work, seeing the importance of preparing people for the big changes that projects can create in their day-to-day work lives. Her undergraduate degree is in Anthropology and Archaeology, and she has a master's degree in Public Administration from The Evergreen State College—go Geoducks! In her off time, Katherine ensures that her five-year-old son and two cats keep up the energy they need to regularly video-bomb her virtual calls.

FUTURE USER QUOTES

" *I think this will be good for users overall.*
—DNR Forest Practices SME

" *This is really important work, and a long time coming. We are behind compared with Oregon but are moving in the right direction.*
—Large Forest Landowner

" *I appreciate the effort going on to make sure that the fpOnline investment meets all of the needs that we've identified as a board, such as what the application needs to be, potential pitfalls, and opportunities.*
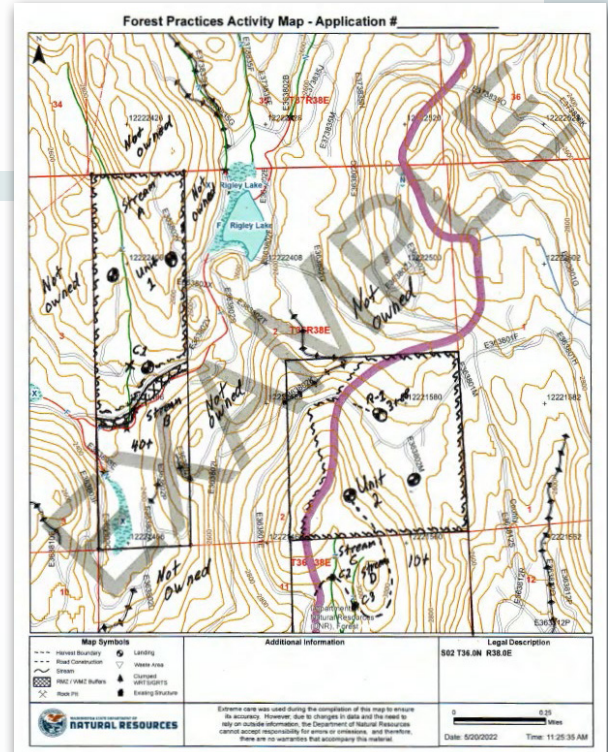—FP Board Member

NERD PAGE

What does DNR do when a handwritten map is submitted through the Forest Practices Application Review System (FPARS)? Will that change under fpOnline?

Short answer: Receiving a hand drawn activity map isn't unusual under our current application system and we don't expect that to change once fpOnline is implemented.

Long answer:

Applicant (Proponent) Tasks

1 Currently, applicants enter the legal location of their proposed activities area into DNR's Forest Practices Application Mapping Tool (FPAMT), and the tool generates the layers required for a complete Forest Practices Application/ Notification (FPA/N). The FPAMT activity map template includes geographic registration tic marks; contour lines; scale bars; map legends and known resources such as road systems, streams, lakes, and wetlands. The FPAMT map template gives the applicant a starting point to build on by hand drawing resources, such as adding a stream or crossing out a road. The applicant must also add the location of their proposed activities by hand drawing things like harvest units, new road construction, culvert or bridge locations, and adding labels or notes.

Forest Practices Activity Map - Application #_____

DNR Staff Tasks

2 During the initial review of the FPA/N, DNR staff ensure maps are legible and meet requirements. Once determined acceptable, DNR staff incorporate the entire FPA/N package into FPARS for review. At this point, DNR cartographers are notified that a new FPA has been entered.

DNR Cartographer Tasks

3 DNR cartographers follow the same steps whether maps are hand drawn from small landowners or GIS-generated maps from large landowners. First, they perform georectification of the maps and then they digitize the unit polygons into FPARs.

Currently, the cartographer only spatially captures harvest units and salvage activities into FPARS. However, if other features are present within the FPA that pertain to installing, replacing, and removing structures on certain water types, the cartographer will spatially capture these into DNR GIS data layers. After the spatial additions are added to FPARs, several automated processes are triggered. These run nightly to provide thematic maps, which Forest Practices Field Foresters use to support their decisions in the FPA approval process.

fpOnline

fpOnline will have drawing tools to digitally draw polygons, lines, points, and annotations, allowing the applicant to create the map within the application process. In addition, fpOnline will include the option of submitting a digital file depicting harvest units.

If technology is not your thing, DNR will continue to accept hand drawn activity maps uploaded into fpOnline during the application submittal process.

Visit DNR's Forest Practices Forms and Instructions page to learn more about creating activity map templates in FPAMT.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Become a member of an advisory committee

Advisory committees will meet throughout the course of the project. Members will receive updates on fpOnline's development and be asked to provide guidance. To join one of these committees, please contact dnrrefponline@dnr.wa.gov.

1. **Internal DNR FP Staff Advisory Committee**
2. **Forest Landowner Advisory Committee**
3. **Reviewer Advisory Committee**

Read the December newsletter to learn more about advisory committees.

You can also attend a Town Hall meeting where we will make major announcements to update everyone who is interested in the current status of the fpOnline project.

Town Hall meeting dates and times will be announced through GovDelivery, through the Region Timber, Fish, and Wildlife (TFW) and Upper Columbia Basin (UCB) email, and on the fpOnline website. The next Town Hall meeting is tentatively planned for Tuesday, April 16, 2024.

KEEPING UP WITH FPONLINE

» Sign up for the GovDelivery email list
» Visit the web page fpOnline | WA – DNR
» Email dnrrefponline@dnr.wa.gov
» Visit Washington State IT Project Dashboard

> "The January 2025 goal [to launch fpOnline] seems lofty, but lofty goals get things done.
> —Large Forest Landowner